

HOME NEWS

Foreign spies 'keeping watch on students at British universities'

From Our Correspondent,
York

The National Union of Students is to investigate the activities of intelligence agents said to be operating in British universities. The union believes that scores of foreign students are under surveillance from their countries' spy networks.

Among the agencies accused of infiltrating universities are the KGB, CIA, SAVAK (the Iranian security organization), and South Africa's Bureau of State Security (BOSS).

The allegations were made yesterday at a union conference at York University, at which delegates called for a detailed report on the agencies' university operations.

Mr Stephen Pearson, president of the students' union at Bradford, said that two students there had been exposed as SAVAK agents instructed to watch some of their 43 Iranian colleagues at the university.

"One agent we exposed had been using the photographic society's equipment to take pictures of Iranian students involved in anti-Shah activities", he said. "We discovered the negatives."

"There is no doubt that some Iranian students who are involved in political activity in this country are afraid of reprisals when they return home."

Mr Pearson also referred to a party of 20 Russian students on a short-term exchange course at Bradford. He said they were constantly chaperoned by a "courier" and were subjected to restrictions on what literature they could read. They were watched closely outside

the university and in their contacts with people.

Mr Charles Clarke, the president of the union, said: "The investigation is aimed at rooting out the intelligence agents who have infiltrated campuses. We are not prepared to tolerate these activities."

"We believe many English universities have agents from various organizations operating within them. Files we have built up on various students substantiate this."

CIA accused: Allegations of large-scale interference by the CIA and other intelligence agencies in student organizations are contained in an article to be published by the National Union of Students next month (Frances Gibb writes). The article, commissioned by the union for its newspaper, *National Student*, was written by Mr Phillip Kelly, a journalist at Interpress, a news agency.

Mr Francis Beckett, editor of *National Student*, said that intelligence agencies, and in particular the CIA, had taken a close interest in student organizations over a long period. Much of the evidence contained in the article came from the union's files.

Mr David Aaronovitch, the union's vice-president in charge of services, said it was believed that former members of the union and others holding senior posts in the student movement had extensive contacts, albeit unwittingly, with British security agents.

Iranian students at Leeds University had not registered an Iranian students' society in their own name through fear of reprisals from Iranian agents, he said.

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of Students~~

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Services

NUS starts university spy hunt

By our Correspondent

The National Union of Students is to investigate the activities of intelligence agents said to be operating within British universities. The union claims that scores of foreign students are under surveillance from their countries' spy networks. Among the agencies accused of infiltrating units are the KGB, CIA, Savak, the Iranian security organisation, and South Africa's Bureau of State Security.

The allegations were made yesterday at a NUS conference at York University at which delegates called for a detailed report on the agencies' university operations.

Mr Steve Pearson, the president of the Students' Union at Bradford, said that two students there had been exposed as Savak agents instructed to watch some of their 43 Iranian colleagues. "One agent we exposed had been using the photographic society's equipment to get pictures of Iranian students involved in anti-Shah activities, and we discovered the negatives. We countered by distributing his photographs and a warning about him. One student returned to Iran for Christmas and we don't expect him back."

Mr Pearson also referred to a party of 20 Russian students who are on a short term exchange course at Bradford. He said they were constantly chaperoned by a "courier," were subjected to restrictions on what literature they could read and were watched closely outside the university.